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Batman: A Lonely Place of Dying. Part 5 of 5



BATMAN

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AUTHORITY

GEORGE
PEREZ



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ALFRED, IT'S ALMOST TWO IN THE MORNING. WE SHOULD HAVE HEARD FROM THEM BY NOW.

SOMETHING'S HAPPENED.

WHAT DO WE DO?

MASTER TIMOTHY, WE WAIT HERE AS I ALWAYS DO.

PATIENTLY.

A LONELY PLACE OF DYING

Chapter Five: REBIRTH

MARY WOLFMAN, GEORGE PEREZ, JIM ARNO, MIKE DECARLO, COSTANZA, ARRIENNE ROY
WRITER CO-EDITOR DIALOGUE INK LETTERER COLORIST
DAN DISFELER DENNY O'NEIL BOB KANE
BRUCE EDITOR EDITOR CREATOR









THIS IS MURDER.
I SHOULDN'T BE
DOING THIS.

ALFRED,
YOU
HAVE TO.



SINCE THAT NIGHT AT THE
CASINO WHEN I FIRST SAW
HIM SNOOPING DOWN FROM
THE DARKNESS... FROM
THE POINT DICK JOINED HIM-

...BATMAN AND
ROBIN HAVE MEANT
EVERYTHING TO
ME.



I'VE FOLLOWED THEM BOTH...
I KNOW THEM SO WELL. I
KNEW WHEN DICK LEFT TO
BECOME NIGHTWING.

I KNEW WHEN
JASON CAME AND BECAME
ROBIN... AND I KNEW
WHEN JASON DIED.



AND I SAW
HOW BATMAN
CHANGED WITH-
OUT THERE
BEING A ROBIN TO
CARE ABOUT.

LOOK, I
NEVER WANTED
THIS FOR MYSELF...



... BUT I WANTED BATMAN AND
ROBIN BACK TOGETHER THE WAY
THEY SHOULD BE.

AND IF DICK
WON'T BECOME
ROBIN AGAIN...

... SOMEONE
ELSE HAS TO!



THIS WAS A
BEAUTIFUL HOUSE. MY
GRANDFATHER BEGAN
CONSTRUCTION ON IT
IN 1899...

... AND COMPLETED
IT TWENTY MONTHS LATER.
TWO YEARS' WORK BRIDGING
TWO CENTURIES.















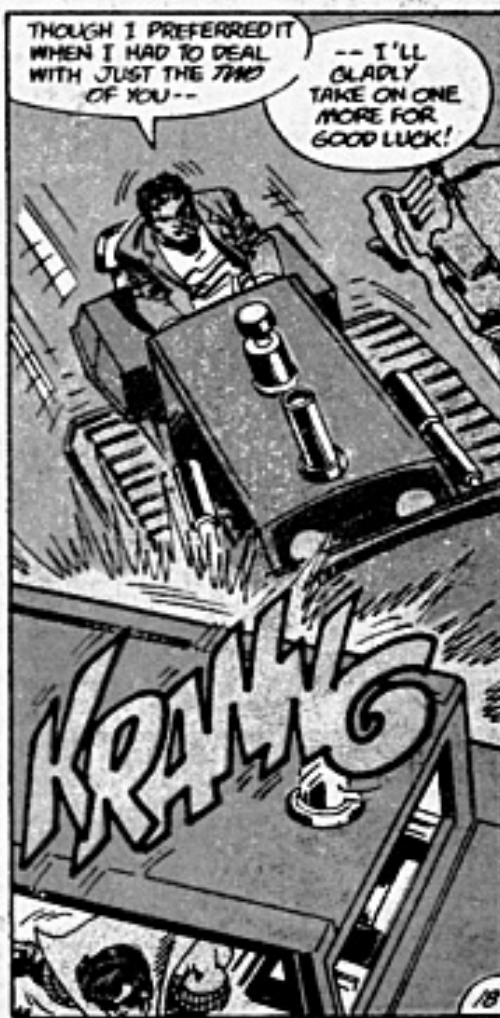


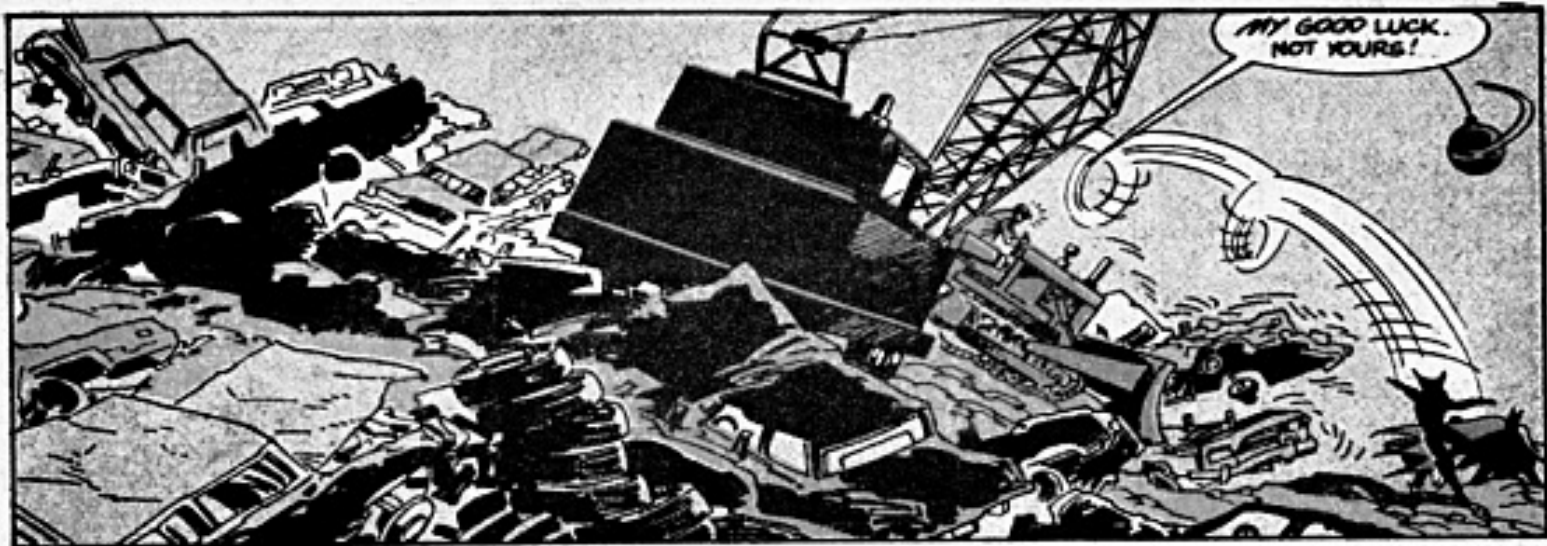






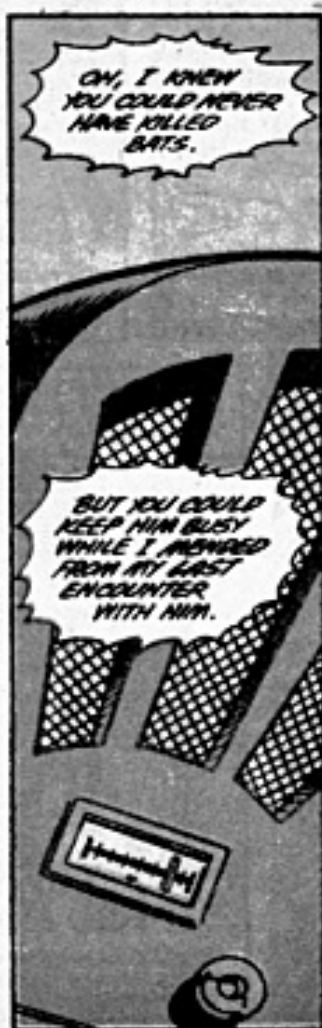












NEXT ISSUE:

THE CRIMESMITH

BAT-SIGNALS

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Dear Editor,

BATMAN: YEAR THREE was a whole lot better than YEARS ONE and TWO. Well, why not? You finally spotlighted my all-time favorite character—Dick Grayson!

THANK YOU for bringing back Dick Grayson to the pages of BATMAN, even though it was for such a short stay. I've waited a very long time for Dick's return. In the future could you please have him visit a little more often?

Until Grayson comes back,

Michelle E. Kotler
64174 Campground Road
Romeo, MI 48065

Dear Denny,

I was surprised at how well YEAR THREE has turned out. Its relevance to current events has made this story every bit as powerful as Miller's YEAR ONE. At last, we're seeing the real effects on Bruce, and Batman, of Jason's death. For a man as obsessive as Bruce Wayne, as Batman, the death of a boy he had personally taken under his wing, as a boy and as a partner, is a blow as crippling as the death of his own parents. And poor Bruce Wayne doesn't have the ability to share his burdens with anyone. His job demands absolute self-reliance, and his life demands that he keep his innermost feelings to himself. Or so he believes. But it isn't hard to see how much damage this can do. It's not good for anyone to bottle up his emotions. When you're as driven as Batman is, those held-in tensions are even more dangerous, and even Dick is held at bay—even Dick can't help him.

Tying in current events with Dick Grayson's own origins was a simple device, performed very well by Marv Wolfman. It was also necessary to enable YEAR THREE to indeed tell the story of that third year, or third phase, in Batman's career, and this association between past and present made current events all the more emotive. I think we all had a quiet cheer when Zucco was gunned down, figuring he'd met his just reward, although we all then breathed a sigh of relief when we found out Batman wasn't a passive accomplice in this crime. Even Dick must have felt, in some way, glad.

The significant event of the last chapter, of course, was that Dick, Nightwing, solved the puzzle before his former partner did. This indicated both how far Dick has progressed from his

early days, and how far backward Batman has gone in the past few months. He's done what he always said not to do, started thinking with his fists, and inevitably, it doesn't work.

The important thing is to follow up this story, and I believe we're in for quite a tale in the next few BATMAN, and TITANS books, resolving this crisis. I also believe that there may be a new Robin on the horizon. It isn't that long since I wondered about giving up the Batman titles, but for the past few months both BATMAN and TEC have hit the heights again, and there's a third title on the way. It's Bat-time again...

Take care,
Malcolm Bourne
6 Craigwell Road
Prestwich, Manchester
M25 8EF, ENGLAND

As you know from reading this issue, there IS a new Robin (which we almost managed to keep a secret except for a production error that spilled the beans prematurely in the BATMAN #440 lettercol. Oops.) Not everyone is thrilled that there is a new Robin, however...

People,

I really cannot have more ambivalent feelings toward the use of a Robin in the BATMAN books. Initially I thought that Robin was necessary to tone down and contrast with Batman's grim persona. Later I decided that Batman worked best alone as the dark avenger of the night. Regardless of how I feel, my thoughts are quite redundant. I understand DC already has a new Robin in the works. That's okay, I guess. After all, Robin doesn't have to appear in every single Batman story. And I'm sure that he won't play a major role in the upcoming third Batman title, which I hear is to be darker in tone than BATMAN and DETECTIVE. So, my major gripe is actually of a "fashion" nature. I really hate Robin's costume. Who was it created to strike fear into—mimes? A comedian once commented that Vice President Dan Quayle was a walking bullet-proof vest for President Bush. After all, who would try to assassinate the President knowing what lurks behind him as the next Commander-in-Chief? To draw parallels—Wouldn't Robin make a better target than Batman?

I enjoyed BATMAN: YEAR THREE. It was nice seeing Batman and Nightwing together. They actually appear to make a better team than Batman and

Robin ... well, at least aesthetically. I once made a comment in the *Amazing Heroes* letter column that Nightwing was the intermediate larval stage between Batman and Robin. Okay—it's goofy, but in retrospect shouldn't Robin's garb be closer to that of Batman's or at least Nightwing's? Just a thought.

Be good.

Your pal,
Lon Wolf
2118 Ryan's Run-East
Maple Shade, NJ 08062

Intermediate larval stage?

We've got more of your speculations about the new Robin, but no room to run them this month, so we'll continue this discussion next time. Meanwhile, we've got about a million questions to answer...

Dear Denny & Dan,

Batman may be getting nastier, but he hasn't sacrificed his ethics totally. On page two of BATMAN #439, we learn that Batman didn't leave the KGBest to die in issue #420! We also learn that the KGBest is still on the loose.

So when is the YEAR TWO trade paperback coming out?

Charlie Harris
Tucson, AZ

In January. It will have a new wrap-around cover by Alan Davis and Paul Neary and an introduction by Mike W. Barr. And about the time that comes out, we'll have a surprise announcement related to those three gentlemen.

Dear Bat-Team,

I've been watching the BATMAN series on TV for about five years and I thought it was time I took a look at the comic book. So, I went over to my local newsstand and picked up a BATMAN. I went home and I didn't even take my shoes off before I started reading it. I've only been collecting BATMAN for two weeks and I now have 4 times as many BATMAN comics as I have of New Mutants.

Keep on dishin' out the good BATMANs.

Ben M. Alsip
Hinsdale, IL

Sounds like a good slogan—"Comics so good, you don't have to take your shoes off!"

Well, maybe not...

BAT-QUESTIONS ANSWERED

Due to the incredible success of the BATMAN movie, we've found ourselves deluged with hundreds of new readers, most of them with dozens of questions about our various Batman publications. We'd like to take a little space to answer some of the more general questions:

1) Back issues of our comics and publications are NOT available from DC. Please DO NOT send us money for back issues—we DON'T have any! Folks selling back issues occasionally advertise in our comics, and your local comics shop should have a good supply of back issues. If you don't know where the comic book shop closest to your home is, check in your local yellow pages under COMIC BOOKS or BOOKS—USED.

2) Subscriptions to our comics ARE available. Details can be found in the indicia (the teeny-weeny type usually appearing on page 1 of all our books), or look for our subscription ads, which run in many of our titles. The subscription ads always advertise a discount or some other special offer, so they are worth seeking out—but PLEASE send your subscriptions and money to the address given in the advertisement or in the indicia. DO NOT send subscriptions to this letter column. If you send subscriptions here, it's very possible that your subscription will be delayed for at least a month or your money could get lost. As you can imagine, the Batman titles get LOTS of mail...

3) Speaking of mail, we get a lot of letters that we can't read because the handwriting is really poor. You don't have to type your letters, but you have to make your handwriting legible so our tired old eyes can make out what you are trying to say. If you do type, PLEASE double-space your letters. And those of you with computers, please change the ribbon on your printer occasionally. BATMAN is currently receiving about 200 letters every month. We can only print about 10, under normal circumstances. Your letter stands a much better chance of being considered for publication if it is well thought out and NEAT! Thanks!

4) Due to the incredible volume of mail that we get, we cannot respond personally to any mail (there are just so many hours in any given day). Nor can we give out the addresses of any of the writers or artists. If you want to write directly to any of the creative people, put the letter in a separate, STAMPED envelope, and we will forward your letter to the appropriate person.

5) We have NO Batman merchandise for sale through this letter column. In fact, we have very little to do with the hundreds of T-shirts, buttons, posters, toys and other Bat-items (most of which are handled through our Licensing Department), so you are on your own when purchasing these items. Our advice is to be very careful about what you buy, as there are many 'bogus' Bat-items out there. Always look for TM symbols and Copyright notices on the items. This is not always a guarantee

that the item is legit, but if it DOESN'T have this Copyright info, it's DEFINITELY a rip-off.

6) Original artwork is NOT available from us. All original artwork is the property of the artists and is returned to them after the issue is published. Many artists sell their original art, mostly at conventions or through advertisements in comic-related magazines and newspapers.

CONTINUITY CORNER

We've also been asked a lot of questions regarding several Batman-related publications and we thought we'd take a little more space to answer these here:

1) Many people have noticed several discrepancies in Robin's (Dick Grayson version) origin between the original telling and the recent re-cap in BATMAN: YEAR THREE. The BATMAN: YEAR THREE story has superseded all previous Robin origins and is now considered the "definitive" origin. Jason Todd's history was recently re-capped in the Who's Who page in BATMAN ANNUAL #13 which is based on the revised origin from BATMAN #408. All previous origins of Jason/Robin are apocryphal. (The Who's Who pages in both BATMAN ANNUAL #13 and DETECTIVE COMICS ANNUAL #2 have all the up-to-date info on many of Batman's friends and foes.)

2) Discrepancies between the BATMAN movie and DC's BATMAN MOVIE ADAPTATION came about because Denny O'Neil and Jerry Ordway began working on the comic book long before final editing was completed on the film. Denny and Jerry worked for close to four months on the adaptation and had to begin work on the project before the film was completed in order for the book to ship when the movie came out. (Almost all comic book adaptations of movies have to be done this way.) Many changes were made in the movie during the editing process, especially in the ending, and these changes were made so late that they could not be incorporated into the adaptation.

3) By the way, the BATMAN movie (as well as the BATMAN MOVIE ADAPTATION), IS NOT a part of Batman continuity.

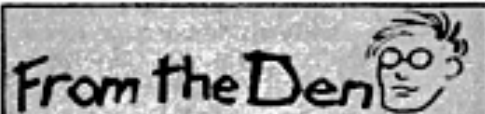
4) Speaking of the Joker's origin, the tale told in BATMAN: THE KILLING JOKE is NOT the definitive origin of the Joker. It's simply one of many POSSIBLE origins. As the Joker himself states (in THE KILLING JOKE: page 39), "Sometimes I remember it one way, sometimes another ... If I'm going to have a past, I prefer it to be multiple choice! Ha Ha Ha!"

5) Since it is set about 20 years in the future, BATMAN: THE DARK KNIGHT RETURNS is also NOT considered to be a part of normal continuity. It is a POSSIBLE future for Batman, one which may or may not happen. We're NOT saying that it couldn't happen, but it would be a shame to limit the Batman's future to this one story. (Besides, if THE DARK KNIGHT RETURNS were the letter of the

law, Batman would have retired following the murder of Jason, and as you can see by the current story, Batman is well on the way to recovery from his great loss.)

NEXT ISSUE: Who is the new mastermind of Gotham City's underworld? Batman is baffled by a series of brilliantly executed crimes ... and an impossible murder in a story by Marv Wolfman, Jim Aparo, and Mike DeCarlo. And in DETECTIVE #810, the Penguin dies. But he rises from the grave to plague Gotham City! And to solve the mystery of the mysterious bat-man, Bruce Wayne constructs a workshop in the caverns beneath Wayne Manor in a flashback story in LEGENDS OF THE DARK KNIGHT #2. And don't forget GOTHAM BY GASLIGHT and ARKHAM ASYLUM and keep on the lookout for a wild Batman poster painted by Steve Rude. See ya!

—KC Carlson
Letter Wrangler to the Stars



Mac gave her birth certificate to the woman at the passport office. The woman scanned it and asked, "Is this the original?"

"Yes," Mac said.

The woman pushed the paper across the counter. "Not acceptable," she said. "We only take copies."

The issuance of Mac's passport was delayed a couple of days, which is exactly what she deserved for being such a competent, organized person that she never managed to lose an important document. (Ma, I've lost my birth certificate at least five times; I greased through the whole process.)

I mulled the implications. What the government was telling us—correct me if I'm wrong—is that copies are more valid than originals. Okay. In that case:

Yellow paint is preferable to gold. Rich Little is the world's finest actor. The map is better than the territory. Parrots are intelligent.

When a teacher makes a student copy paragraphs from a textbook, the teacher is developing the student's creativity.

Statues are great company. Photographs are greater company. Plagiarism is a virtuous act.

A postcard is superior to the Eiffel Tower.

Enough. I'd like to add to the list, but I'm hungry, so I've got to go read a cookbook.

By the way, what you see below is a photostat of a signature I did a couple of years ago.

Denny